



## **Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks**

Region 2 Headquarters  
3201 Spurgin Road  
Missoula, MT 59804  
Phone 406-542-5500  
Fax 406-542-5529

February 23, 2016

Dear Interested Citizen:

Enclosed you will find for your review the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for a Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) proposal to enter into a 10-year Cooperative Habitat Management Lease Agreement with the Pocha Ranch in Powell County, about 4 miles NNW of Helmville. Under the proposed action the Pocha Ranch would have limited use for wintering livestock and grazing (cattle) or haying of approximately 70 acres of dry-land tame-grass pasture located on FWP's Aunt Molly Wildlife Management Area (AMWMA). In exchange, 53 acres of Blackfoot River riparian habitat on the Pocha Ranch would be managed as part of AMWMA. This parcel would be managed for wildlife habitat and would be open for public hunting and recreational opportunity that is consistent with public use rules on the AMWMA. Additionally, the 53-acre parcel would provide access to an isolated portion of the AMWMA that is currently landlocked or publicly accessible only under Montana's Stream Access Law.

The EA may also be obtained by mail from Region 2 FWP, 3201 Spurgin Rd., Missoula 59804; by phoning 406-542-5540; by emailing [shrose@mt.gov](mailto:shrose@mt.gov); or by viewing FWP's Internet website <http://fwp.mt.gov> ("News," then "Public Notices," beginning February 23). Comments may be made online on the EA webpage or may be directed by mail or email to the addresses above. Comments must be received by FWP no later than 5:00 p.m. on March 23, 2016.

If you have specific questions about this proposal, please contact area wildlife biologist Scott Eggeman (406-542-5542, [seggeman@mt.gov](mailto:seggeman@mt.gov)).

As part of the decision making process under the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA), I expect to issue the Decision Notice for this EA very soon after the end of the comment period. The Montana Fish & Wildlife Commission has the final decision-making authority for FWP land leases, and the Commission will be asked to render its decision on this proposal at its April 14<sup>th</sup> meeting in Dillon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randy Arnold", written in a cursive, flowing style.

Randy Arnold  
Regional Supervisor

RA/sr